

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS WEEKLY REPORT

Weekly Highlights At-A-Glance

FEDERAL – Legislative

S. 4641 - Public Engagement Opportunity on Public Land Exploration Act of 2020. On October 20, official bill text was made available for [S. 4641](#), known as the *Public Engagement Opportunity on Public Land Exploration Act of 2020* or the *PEOPLE Act of 2020*. The measure, sponsored by Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO), would “amend the Mineral Leasing Act to provide for transparency and landowner protections in the conduct of lease sales.” Specifically, the legislation would: (1) Increase Transparency for Lease Nominations and Bids; (2) Establish Straightforward Notice and Public Comment Periods; (3) Improve Coordination with Local Governments and Other Federal Agencies; and (4) Minimize Conflict in Split-Estates. [Read more.](#)

S. 4642 - Oil and Gas Bonding Reform and Orphaned Well Remediation Act. On October 20, official bill text was made available for [S. 4642](#), known as the *Oil and Gas Bonding Reform and Orphaned Well Remediation Act*. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO), would “amend the Mineral Leasing Act to ensure sufficient bonding and complete and timely reclamation of land and water disturbed by Federal and Indian oil and gas production.” According to Sen. Bennet, the bill’s purpose is “to clean up abandoned, or orphaned, oil and gas wells while strengthening bonding requirements and expanding opportunities for local input in lease sales on public lands [while ensuring taxpayers] are not left on the hook for future cleanup and remediation costs.” [Read more.](#)

Congressional Energy Export Caucus. On October 22, a bipartisan group of Congressional lawmakers launched the [Congressional Energy Export Caucus](#), which will “reestablish U.S. leadership with a pro-

energy trade agenda that creates jobs, rebuilds the economy, modernizes American energy infrastructure, strengthens U.S. security, and maintains global trade competitiveness.” One of the group’s leaders, Rep. Carol Miller (R-WV) noted, “American energy is a significant competitive advantage that we must embrace, and the Congressional Energy Export Caucus will champion the growth of American energy exports with our allies and into the developing world. This work will create new jobs, build up our infrastructure, and solidify our national security. I look forward to working with Congressmen Cuellar, Arrington, and Correa to advance our shared goals.” Industry leaders and stakeholders offered praise for the initiative. “Texas oil and gas producers applaud the formation of the Energy Export Caucus in the House that will work to expand markets for American energy,” said Cyé Wagner, Chairman of the Texas Alliance of Energy Producers. “We are encouraged by the bipartisan efforts to launch the Congressional Energy Export Caucus, and applaud their mission to encourage American energy exports and further trade relationships with emerging markets,” said Dustin Meyer, American Petroleum Institute Director of Market Development. [Read more.](#)

FEDERAL – Regulatory

BLM Lease Stipulations. On October 23, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Oklahoma Field Office announced a comment period for recently revised conditions, or stipulations, that will be placed on Federal mineral lease parcels previously sold by the BLM in New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas. “The revised stipulations cover competitive oil and gas lease sales held in June 2019, September 2019, November 2019 and February 2020. Since these leases were sold, the BLM Oklahoma Field Office has

finalized the Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas Resource Management Plan, which provides direction on how the lands within the Field Office's jurisdiction are used. The Resource Management Plan Record of Decision was approved on March 9, 2020. Under current regulations, all actions approved or authorized by the BLM must conform to the existing land use plan where one exists. Therefore, the BLM must ensure that when a lease is issued, that the newly developed oil and gas lease stipulations and notices are used." The public comment period is open through December 9, 2020. [Read more.](#)

BLM Resource Advisory Councils. On October 22, the BLM published a notice of meeting, *Notice of Public Meeting, Southern New Mexico Resource Advisory Council, New Mexico* ([85 Fed. Reg. 67370](#)), to announce the Southern New Mexico Resource Advisory Council meeting scheduled for December 2 where a number of public land management topics will be discussed. The meeting is open to the public. [Read more.](#)

BLM Resource Advisory Councils. On October 14, the BLM published a notice to request public nominations for 11 of the BLM's statewide and regional Resource Advisory Councils (RAC) located in the West that have vacant positions and/or members whose terms are scheduled to expire. "These RACs provide advice and recommendations to the BLM on land use planning and management of the National System of Public Lands within their geographic areas." Nominations must be received no later than November 13, 2020. [Read more.](#)

BLM Advisory Committees – Utah. On October 14, the BLM published a notice requesting public nominations to BLM citizens' advisory committees affiliated with specific sites on the BLM's National Conservation Lands, specifically Bears Ears National Monument Advisory Committee and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Advisory Committee. The "advisory committees provide advice and recommendations to the BLM on the development and implementation of management plans in accordance with the statutes under which

the sites were established." Nominations must be received no later than November 13, 2020. [Read more.](#)

Pipeline Corridor Initiative – Wyoming. On October 27, the BLM published its Notice of Availability for the [Environmental Impact Statement](#) (EIS) for the Wyoming Pipeline Corridor Initiative (WPCI). (See *Notice of Availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Wyoming Pipeline Corridor Initiative (WPCI) Resource Management Plan Amendments to 9 BLM-Wyoming Resource Management Plans*; [85 Fed. Reg. 68087](#)) Wyoming Gov. Mark Gordon's (R) office said that the state has worked on plans for the pipeline corridor system "for almost a decade." The proposed WPCI plan would designate roughly 1,150 miles of BLM federal land in Wyoming for "a dedicated pipeline corridor system" that Gordon's office said would support carbon capture and utilization efforts. "Designated corridors under the WPCI would enable transportation of CO₂ from CO₂ capture units to where it could be sold, used for sequestration, or used in enhanced oil recovery," Gordon's office said in the release. "The State of Wyoming's proposal focuses pipeline development in existing federal energy corridors or adjacent to existing pipeline infrastructure for approximately 95 percent of the corridor network." The official BLM publication starts the mandated 60-day "Governor's Consistency Review" period to "ensure conformity with state and local plans, policies and programs." [Read more.](#)

Interior Department Offshore Rulemaking. On October 16, the Interior Department's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) published a notice of proposed rulemaking, *Risk Management, Financial Assurance and Loss Prevention* ([85 Fed. Reg. 65904](#)), which "proposes to streamline its evaluation criteria for determining whether oil, gas and sulfur lessees, right-of-use and easement (RUE) grant holders, and pipeline right-of-way grant holders may be required to provide bonds or other security above the prescribed amounts for base bonds to ensure compliance with their Outer

Continental Shelf (OCS) obligations. BOEM's portion of the proposed rule would also remove restrictive provisions for third-party guarantees and decommissioning accounts, and would add new criteria under which additional bonds and third-party guarantees may be cancelled. Based on the proposed framework, BOEM estimates its amount of financial assurance would decrease from \$3.3 billion to \$3.1 billion, although it would provide greater protection as the financial assurance would be focused on the riskiest properties. BSEE's portion of this proposed rule would establish the order in which BSEE could order predecessor lessees, owners of operating rights, or grant holders, who have accrued decommissioning obligations, to perform those obligations when the current owners of a lease or grant fail to do so. BSEE's proposed provisions would also clarify decommissioning responsibilities for RUE grant holders and require that any party appealing any final decommissioning order provide a surety bond to ensure that funding for decommissioning is available if the order is affirmed on appeal and the liable party subsequently defaults." The public comment period is open through December 15.

[Read more.](#)

ONRR Information Collection. On October 15, the Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR) published the following notice: *Agency Information Collection Activities; Collection of Monies Due the Federal Government; and Processing Refund Requests Related to Overpayments Made to ONRR* ([85 Fed. Reg. 65395](#)). The ONRR notice proposes "to renew an information collection with revisions. Through this Information Collection Request (ICR), ONRR seeks authority to collect information related to the paperwork requirements covering cross-lease netting in the calculation of late-payment interest; a lessee's designation of designee for payment obligations; tribal permission for recoupment on Indian oil and gas leases; and refund requests for overpayments made to ONRR." The public comment period is open through December 14.

[Read more.](#)

FEDERAL – Judicial

Royalties; Leasing; Jurisdiction – Louisiana. On October 26, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, on appeal from the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana, found that litigants bringing royalty claims against a group of oil and gas companies did not have jurisdiction to bring those claims in Louisiana despite lease negotiations taking place in the state and royalties being sent there over a 30 year period. In *Libersat v. Sundance Energy, Inc.* (Case No. 20-30121), the plaintiffs brought suit for royalties pursuant to a Texas lease. The plaintiffs alleged that the defendant companies negligently calculated royalty distributions and attempted to coerce them to sign an indemnity agreement when the error was brought to their attention. The Fifth Circuit affirmed the district court's dismissal of all claims against the companies for lack of personal jurisdiction. After addressing each defendant's contact with the state, the Court held that the district court correctly found that the defendants did not have "sufficient minimum contacts" with the state of Louisiana to support an exercise of "specific personal jurisdiction" to maintain this action in Louisiana and upheld case dismissal. [Read more.](#)

Endangered Species Act – Maryland. On October 21, a group of environmental activists filed suit in federal court against the Trump administration claiming it violated the Endangered Species Act with its assessment of the harm that offshore oil and gas drilling could do to wildlife in the Gulf of Mexico. In *Sierra Club v. National Marine Fisheries Service* (Case No. 8:20-cv-03060), the litigants claim the governing agency issued an "arbitrary and capricious programmatic biological opinion governing federally authorized oil and gas activities in the Gulf of Mexico." The groups are asking the court to strike down the related environmental assessment for the agency's failure to use the "best available science." The group is also asking the court to make the agency issue a new opinion that accurately accounts for the harms and requires the Interior Department to actively protect against them. [Read more.](#)

BLM Resource Management Plans – Montana.

(Update to 10/5/20 Weekly Report) On October 16, a Montana federal district judge “unraveled the work of former Bureau of Land Management (BLM) acting Director William Perry Pendley, throwing out land management plans in Montana in a case that could jeopardize the agency’s work elsewhere across the country.” Judge Brian Morris’s latest decision in [Bullock v. U.S. Bureau of Land Management](#) (Case No. 4:20-cv-00062-BMM), “invalidates three land management plans Pendley supervised in Montana, including one that would open 95 percent of 650,000 acres of BLM land to resource extraction like mining and drilling.” But the Court “stopped short of applying the ruling to any of Pendley’s other decisions, despite devoting much of the decision to castigating the Interior Department for failing to comply with his order to supply a list of actions that he may have taken illegally.” According to the opinion, “it remains probable that additional actions taken by Pendley” should be set aside as unlawful. For background, on September 25, the [same court ousted William Perry Pendley as the top official at the BLM](#) noting that Pendley had effectively been serving as acting BLM Director unlawfully for 424 days without Senate confirmation. The judge in the case added that Pendley’s authority, “did not follow any of the permissible paths set forth by the U.S. Constitution.” In June, President Trump nominated Pendley to permanently lead the BLM, but his name was withdrawn in August. Other decisions made by Pendley may also reportedly be invalidated as a result of the court’s finding, but to date no others have been affected. These rulings arise from the original lawsuit brought by Montana Democratic Governor Steve Bullock in July seeking removal of Pendley as acting BLM Director. In the suit, [Bullock v. Bureau of Land Management](#) (Case No. 4:20-cv-00062), the governor claimed Pendley’s appointment “directly contravenes the Federal Vacancies Reform Act, which prohibits acting officers from running agencies while their nominations are pending before the Senate.” The suit had been deemed politically motivated as Bullock is currently running to unseat first-term Republican Montana Senator Steve Daines. In

response to the October 16 ruling, BLM spokesman Derrick Henry called Morris’s order “erroneous” and the Interior Department “is reviewing all legal options to fight this outrageous decision.” [Read more.](#)

STATE – Legislative

Tax Credits; Carryforward – Louisiana. As part of the legislature’s [30-day Special Session](#), on October 21, SB 1 was transmitted to Gov. John Bel Edwards (D) after passing both houses of the legislature. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Rick Ward, III (R), extends the carryforward period for the inventory tax credit for certain businesses. Per the sponsoring bill analysis, “Current law provides a state tax credit against income and franchise taxes for ad valorem taxes paid to local governments on inventory held by manufacturers, distributors, retailers, and on natural gas used in storage facilities. The credit is refundable or nonrefundable depending on various factors applicable to each taxpayer. To the extent a portion of the credit is nonrefundable, a taxpayer has a five-year carryforward period within which to utilize unused credit amounts against tax liabilities. Proposed law changes the carryforward period from five years to ten years, and provides that the ten-year carryforward period only applies to applicable taxes paid on or after January 1, 2020.” [Read more.](#)

Severance Taxes – Louisiana. As part of the legislature’s [30-day Special Session](#), on October 21, HB 29 passed both houses. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Phillip DeVillier (R), suspends severance taxes on production from certain oil wells and would exempt oil produced from any newly drilled or from a completed well undergoing well enhancements that require a Department of Natural Resources permit such as re-entries, workovers or plug backs from the severance tax. The exemption would apply to production on or after October 1 and before December 31, 2025. The exemption would expire after 24 months or until the payout of the well cost is achieved, whichever occurs first. [Read more.](#)

Electronic Execution of Documents – Michigan. *(Update to 10/19/20 Weekly Report)* On October

26, HB 6294 was transmitted to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) after passing both houses of the legislature. The bill, introduced by Rep. Sarah Lightner (R), would “amend the Estates and Protected Individuals Code (EPIC) to allow certain documents to be signed or witnessed using two-way real-time audiovisual technology and to allow certain visits required under EPIC to be conducted using that technology.” [Read more.](#)

Register of Deeds – Michigan. On October 13, HB 6296 passed the House and has been transmitted to the Senate. The bill, introduced by Rep. Sarah Lightner (R), would “amend the Uniform Real Property Electronic Recording Act to provide that all of the following apply beginning April 30, 2020, through December 31, 2020: A register of deeds must accept electronic documents for recording. (If a register of deeds did not have the equipment to accept an electronic document, the register of deeds would have to accept for recording a tangible of an electronic document properly notarized under the Michigan Law on Notarial Acts.); A register of deeds need only act in substantial compliance with the act and any standards established by the Electronic Recording Commission; A register of deeds must deem all financial institutions and all title insurance companies or their employed or contracted settlement agents as covered by an agreement establishing a verified transactional relationship as required under the act. The register of deeds can ask the financial institution or title insurance company for verification of a notary’s employment or contractual association; and a financial instrument must accept a document or electronic document recorded by a register of deeds as provided above.” According to the legislature, this bill is tied to HB 6297 (see below) which means that HB 6297 must be enacted in order for HB 6296 to be given effect under the law. [Read more.](#)

Notaries Public – Michigan. (Update to 10/19/20 Weekly Report) On October 26, HB 6297 was transmitted to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) after passing both houses of the legislature. The bill,

introduced by Rep. Sarah Lightner (R), would “amend the Michigan Law on Notarial Acts to allow notaries public to use two-way real-time audiovisual technology to perform notarial acts electronically under certain circumstances.” [Read more.](#)

Notaries Public – Minnesota. On October 21, Gov. Tim Walz (D) signed HF 15 into law. The measure, sponsored by Rep. Mike Freiberg (D), allows video conferencing to fulfill the requirement to personally appear before a notarial officer for real estate document notarization in light of COVID-19. The Act is effective the day following final enactment and expires January 6, 2021. [Read more.](#)

Notarial Acts – Pennsylvania. On October 29, HB 2370 was signed into law by Gov. Tom Wolf (D) after unanimous passage in the House and Senate. The bi-partisan bill allows for certain remote, electronic notarial acts as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the bill will “authorize the electronic notarization of documents where the signer appears before the notary by means of real-time audio-video communication.” The Act takes immediate effect. [Read more.](#)

Employee Misclassification Task Force – Pennsylvania. (Update to 11/4/19 Weekly Report) On October 29, HB 716 was signed into law by Gov. Tom Wolf (D) after unanimous passage in the House and Senate. The bi-partisan bill creates a joint agency task force on employee misclassification. According to the [sponsor’s memorandum](#), “The task force will investigate the practice and develop and implement a comprehensive plan to reduce misclassification in Pennsylvania. With this task force in place, we will be able to properly identify the scope of the problem and create a plan to solve it.” Members of the bi-partisan task force include the Attorney General, the Secretary of Labor and Industry, the Secretary of Revenue, and appointees by the President Pro Tempore, the Minority Leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives. The first Task Force report will not be issued before March 2022. The Act is effective 60 days after signed. [Read more.](#)

Public Natural Resources Trust Fund –

Pennsylvania. On October 19, HB 2934 was introduced by Rep. Jennifer O'Mara (D). The bill would "create a Public Natural Resources Trust Fund, which would receive money from oil and gas developed on the over 385,000 acres of Pennsylvania land leased for such development. The money would be put into a trust fund and used for various conservation projects carried out by the Pennsylvania Departments of Conservation and Natural Resources, Environmental Protection, and Agriculture." [Read more.](#)

STATE – Regulatory

Production Tax Ballot Measure – Alaska. On election day November 3, Alaska voters will weigh in on [Ballot Measure 1](#), known as the Fair Share Act, which seeks to overhaul Alaska's formula for claiming revenue from crude oil extracted from the Alpine, Kuparuk, and Prudhoe Bay fields. The ballot measure group, Vote Yes for Alaska's Fair Share, says passing the measure would bring in new state revenue and help prevent the state from cutting the annual Permanent Fund dividend to pay for state services. For their part, oil companies have invested millions in campaigns to urge voters to vote "no" on the initiative to rewrite existing Alaska tax law. ConocoPhillips Alaska might retreat from drilling on the North Slope if the ballot proposal is approved in the election, according to company president Joe Marushack. "This is an increase of the severance taxes by 150% to 300% depending on oil prices," said Marushack during a recent Alaska Chamber [presentation](#). "That's in addition to the income taxes we pay, the royalties we pay, the operating costs we pay. This is a huge increase on industry." [Read more.](#)

Oil and Gas Tax Assessments – Louisiana. On election day November 3, Louisiana voters will weigh in on a ballot initiative to determine the way the state values oil and gas wells for property tax purposes. The passage of [Amendment 2](#) would allow local tax assessors to account for the presence or production of oil or gas to be included in the methodology

used to determine the fair market value of a well. Currently, assessments do not account for the presence or production of oil or gas and instead relies on other criteria such as the cost of a replacement well and the type of equipment used. This means wells using the same equipment have identical tax bills even if one of the wells is not producing. The Republican backed amendment has the support of the Louisiana Oil and Gas Association, the Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association, and the Louisiana Assessor's Association. [Read more.](#)

Proposed Methane Emissions Rulemaking – New

Mexico. As recently reported by *Forbes*, following up on the [2019 New Mexico Climate Strategy Initial Recommendations and Status Update](#) released last year by the administration of Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D), "New Mexico regulators are developing what could become the strictest standards in the nation to regulate the volumes of methane released into the environment by oil and gas operators. Two state regulatory agencies are crafting complementary regulations to address emissions, one from the standpoint of waste of resource and the other looking to curtail environmental pollution." In October, "the New Mexico Oil Conservation Division (OCD) and its parent agency the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD), [released its final proposed waste-reduction rule](#), which would require oil and gas operators to capture 98% of the natural gas they produced by 2026." OCD Deputy Director Tiffany Polak said the EMNRD rules "would be implemented in two main phases. In the first phase, which is scheduled to take place through the end of 2021, the agency will collect data related to each operator's current emissions, in order to set baseline emission reduction targets. Then, at the end of next year or into early 2022, those baseline targets will be set." [Read more.](#)

Oil and Gas Well Incentives – North Dakota. On October 23, the [North Dakota Special Emergency Commission approved a request](#) from the North Dakota Industrial Commission, Division of Oil

and Gas, to utilize federal funds provided by the Coronavirus Relief Fund created by the federal CARES Act for an oil and gas incentive program totaling \$16 million. The Drilled but Uncompleted (DUC) Well Completion Incentive Program will provide incentives for the completion of a number of DUC wells, provide employment opportunities, and provide 150-200 long-term production jobs to operate new wells within the state.

[Read more.](#)

STATE – Judicial

State Regulations; Horizontal Wells – New Mexico.

On September 23, in *Jalapeno Corp. v. New Mexico Oil Conservation Commission* (Case No. A-1-CA-37449), the New Mexico Court of Appeals addressed a challenge to the Commission's 2018 Rules governing horizontal wells. Jalapeno claimed that the 2018 Rules establishing guidelines for well spacing, infill horizontal wells, and transitional provisions are arbitrary and capricious and contrary to law. Specifically, Jalapeno claimed that concerning well spacing, the Commission's failure to specify acreage requirements for horizontal spacing units contravenes its purported legal duty to establish spacing units based on the area that can be efficiently and economically drained by one well, and abdicates to operators its statutory obligation to fix well spacing. This Court disagreed and affirmed the lower court ruling in favor of the Commission noting that the rule "delineates clear criteria that a standard horizontal spacing unit must satisfy: the minimum number and size of the tracts that must be included in the spacing unit; the maximum radius within which an operator may include certain subdivisions of sections; the form of the spacing unit; and the minimum size of the spacing unit if subject to a special pool order. The Commission found, to maximize recovery and minimize waste, the spacing regulations for horizontal wells should allow 'the drilling to follow geological stress patterns' which extend across relatively long distances, permitting those stress pattern to determine the required acreage, subject to the formula set forth in the rule. Jalapeno does not challenge the Commission's

findings. We conclude that Jalapeno has not demonstrated that the 2018 Rules misinterpret or misapply the law or that they are not reasonably related to the Commission's duty to prevent waste and protect correlative rights." Jalapeno also challenged the Commission's rules regarding infill wells. Specifically, Jalapeno contended that the effect of the adoption of the newly promulgated definition of "infill horizontal well" is arbitrary and capricious and is contrary to law because it violates the correlative rights of non-consenting owners bound by compulsory pooling orders. Second, Jalapeno contended that the Commission's imposition of a two hundred percent risk charge on multiple infill horizontal wells ignores the language of the statute authorizing those charges. Again, the Court disagreed and upheld the rulemaking.

[Read more.](#)

Deeds; Reservations – Ohio. On September 30, in *Richards v. Hillgas* (Case No. 2020-Ohio-4717), the Ohio Court of Appeals, Seventh District, addressed disputes over oil and gas rights in multiple deed reservations. As to one of the deeds the Court found that while the deed clearly intended to convey the surface, "there is no specific exception or reservation language regarding the oil and gas rights" and accordingly, "Oil and gas rights must be excepted or reserved in a title transaction otherwise those rights transfer with the surface." The Court also found a genuine issue of material fact in the interpretation of another deed which excepted coal, as well as making determinations about successors in interest. [Read more.](#)

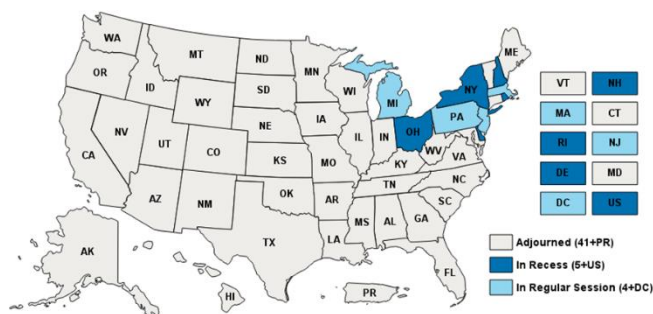
INDUSTRY NEWS FLASH

► **ConocoPhillips announces net-zero emissions goal by 2050.** On October 19, ConocoPhillips reportedly "surprised investors and analysts" by outlining plans to reduce its operational emissions by as much as 45% by 2030 and then wind that down to nothing by 2055. "We're the first U.S. based oil and gas company to take this step," said Chief Executive Officer Ryan Lance during a conference

call intended to discuss the company's \$9.7 billion deal to acquire Concho Resources. [Read more.](#)

LEGISLATIVE SESSION OVERVIEW

States in Session



Session Notes (by date): Massachusetts, the Michigan House, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania are in regular session. The District of Columbia Council is also in session. The following are in recess until the dates provided: Michigan Senate (November 4), U.S. Senate (November 9) and Ohio (November 10).

Delaware, the New Hampshire Senate, New York, and Rhode Island are in recess subject to the call of the chair. The U.S. House is in recess subject to the call of the chair until November 16.

Louisiana adjourned its special session on October 23 after discussing approaches to in-person education and the survival of the economy during the COVID-19 pandemic, reports [KATC 3](#).

Missouri Republican Gov. Mike Parson has called for a special session to convene on November 5 to discuss CARES Act spending, reports [ABC 17](#).

Signing Deadlines (by date): Virginia Democratic Gov. Ralph Northam has until November 15 to act on legislation from the most recent special session or it becomes law without signature. New York Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo has until February 5, 2021 to act on legislation or it is pocket vetoed. Louisiana Democratic Gov. John Bel Edwards has 20 days from presentment to sign or veto legislation or it becomes law without signature. Maine Democratic

Gov. Janet Mills must act on legislation presented within 10 days of adjournment or it becomes law unless returned within three days after the next meeting of the same legislature. South Carolina Republican Gov. Henry McMaster has until two days after the next meeting of the legislature to act on legislation or it becomes law. Vermont Republican Gov. Phil Scott has five days from presentment, Sundays excepted, to act on legislation or it will become law without signature.

Interim Committee Hearings: The following states are currently holding 2020 interim committee hearings: [Alabama](#), [Alaska](#), [Arizona](#), [Arkansas](#), [California Assembly](#) and [Senate](#), [Colorado](#), [Connecticut](#), [Delaware](#), [Georgia House](#) and [Senate](#), [Hawaii](#), [Idaho](#), [Illinois](#), [Indiana](#), [Iowa](#), [Kansas](#), [Kentucky](#), [Louisiana](#), [Maine](#), [Maryland](#), [Minnesota](#), [Mississippi House](#) and [Senate](#), [Missouri House](#) and [Senate](#), [Montana](#), [Nebraska](#), [Nevada](#), [New Mexico](#), [New York Assembly](#) and [Senate](#), [North Carolina](#), [North Dakota](#), [Oklahoma House](#) and [Senate](#), [Oregon](#), [Rhode Island](#), [South Carolina House](#) and [Senate](#), [South Dakota](#), [Tennessee](#), [Texas Senate](#), [Utah](#), [Vermont](#), [Virginia](#), [Washington](#), [Wisconsin](#), [West Virginia](#) and [Wyoming](#).

Bill Pre-Files: [Alabama](#), [Florida](#), [Iowa](#), [Kentucky](#), [Montana](#), [Nebraska](#), [Nevada](#), [New Hampshire](#), [Oklahoma](#), [Utah](#) and [Virginia](#) are currently posting 2021 bill drafts, pre-files and interim studies. ■

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